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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/801,366	03/06/2001	Kevin W. Young	6871-123/10026595	4284

167 7590 03/22/2005

FULBRIGHT AND JAWORSKI L L P  
PATENT DOCKETING 29TH FLOOR  
865 SOUTH FIGUEROA STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CA 900172576

EXAMINER
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JARRETT, SCOTT L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3623

DATE MAILED: 03/22/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/801,366

Applicant(s)

YOUNG ET AL.

Examiner

Scott L. Jarrett

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 February 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 7-9 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 and 10-16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 May 2001 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892),
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 6/11/01, 6/20/02.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. This Office Action is responsive to applicant's preliminary amendment filed February 14, 2003. Applicant's amendment of February 14, 2003 amended claims 1-6, canceled claims 7-9 and added new claims 10-16. Currently claims 1-6 and 10-16 are pending.

#### ***Specification***

2. The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The following title is suggested: System for minimally merging multiple work breakdown structures.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 1-4 and 10-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite and failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which the applicant regards as the invention.

Regarding Claims 1, 3-4, 12 and 14 the disclosure does not clearly define the phrases "synthesizing" or "synthesis." The phrases "synthesizing" or "synthesis" could include a plurality of concepts including but not limited to: merge, insert, combine, put together, summarize, integrate, reconcile, link, bring together, or the like thereby making

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the phrases as claimed vague and indefinite. The examiner interpreted the phrases "synthesizing" or "synthesis" to mean any of the plurality of meanings discussed above.

Regarding Claims 2, 11 and 13 the disclosure does not clearly define the phrases "de-synthesizing" or "de-synthesis." The phrases "de-synthesizing" or "de-synthesis" could include a plurality of concepts including but not limited to: remove, reverse, unmerge, take apart, unlink, uncombined, decompose, etc. thereby making the phrases as claimed vague and indefinite. The examiner interpreted the phrases "de-synthesizing" or "de-synthesis" to mean any of the plurality of meanings discussed above.

Regarding Claims 1-4, 10 and 12-14 the disclosure does not clearly define the phrase "outcome." The phrase "outcome" could include a plurality of concepts including but not limited to: goal, objective, task completion, project completion, sub-project, work breakdown structure, effect, activity, total cost, completion date, deliverable, article, product, service, milestone or the like thereby making the phrase as claimed vague and indefinite. The examiner interpreted the phrase outcome to mean any of the plurality of meanings discussed above.

Regarding Claims 4 and 14, the disclosure does not clearly define the phrase "system." A system as claimed could contain a plurality of elements and without further definition of the system elements the phrase as claimed is vague and indefinite.

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101***

5. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

6. Claims 1-3 and 10-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter.

The basis of this rejection is set forth in a two-prong test of:

- (1) whether the invention is within the technological arts; and
- (2) whether the invention produces a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

For a claimed invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must be within the technological arts. Mere ideas in the abstract (i.e., abstract idea, law of nature, natural phenomena) that do not apply, involve, use, or advance the technological arts fail to promote the "progress of science and the useful arts" (i.e., the physical sciences as opposed to social sciences, for example) and therefore are found to be non-statutory subject matter. For a process claim to pass muster, the recited process must somehow apply, involve, use, or advance the technological arts.

Additionally, for a claimed invention to be statutory, the claimed invention must produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

Regarding Claims 1-3 and 10-13, Claims 1-3 and 10-13 only recite an abstract idea. The recited process for generating a project work breakdown structure and related workflows does not apply, involve, or use the technological arts since all of the recited steps can be performed in the mind of the user or by use of a pencil and paper.

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The claimed invention, as a whole, is not within the technological art as explained above  
claims 1-3 and 10-13 are deemed to be directed to non-statutory subject matter.

Correction required. See MPEP § 2106 [R-2].

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 1-6 and 10-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Microsoft Corporation's Microsoft Project 2000 (November 1999) aspects of which are discussed in the following references:

I. Microsoft Project 2000 and Microsoft Project Central Extend Project

Management to a Broader Knowledge Worker Audience (November 1999)

hereinafter referred to as reference A;

II. Microsoft Project 2000 Feature Guide (Beta) herein after referred to as

reference B; and

III. Courter, Gini et al., Mastering Microsoft Project 2000 (March 2000) herein

after referred to as reference C.

Regarding Claims 1 and 12 Microsoft Project 2000 teaches a system, method and process for generating a project work breakdown structures (WBS) and related workflows (projects, project plan, process, tasks, activities, etc.), comprising (see reference A: Pages 1 and 3; see reference B: Figures 1-7 as shown below; Pages 8-10, 19-22, 25-26, 28-29 and 39; see reference C: Chapter 14 Sharing Resources and Tasks among Multiple Projects, Pages 335-363; Chapter 19 Importing and Exporting

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Project Data, pages 507-592; Pages 22, 144, 147, 343-347, 628-629; Figures 2.3, 14.6-14.9):

(a) selecting an existing project WBS (template, master template, master project, project wizard, master files, project database, base project, etc.) with related workflows (sub-projects, linked projects, network of interdependent activities, etc.);

(b) selecting at least one desired outcome (goal, task completion, project, sub-project, etc.) for synthesis (insert project, consolidating projects) having an associated workflow (e.g. consolidating multiple projects each project representing a different outcome (deliverable, phase, effort) in the project wherein the initial project information is selected from a plurality of existing standard project templates, frameworks, or the like);

(c) synthesizing (inserting, consolidating, linking, etc.) the selected (first) workflow (project, master project, etc.) with an existing project, wherein the project further includes a WBS and related workflows (see reference B: pages 25-26; see reference C: Pages 343 and 345-347; Figures 14.6-14.9).

Microsoft Project 2000 teaches that the system and method for generating work breakdown structures and related workflows further enables the user to, during consolidation of multiple projects (see reference A: Paragraph 3, Page 1; see reference C: Page 345-347) to:

- add activities into the selected workflow which is not already present in the project WBS and its related workflows;



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- add activity dependencies (links) that should be present between any of the added activities and any of the activities already present in the project WBS and its related workflows (see reference C: Pages 162-171); and
- introduce summary activities as required into the project WBS (rollup, summary activities; see reference B: Pages 21 and 29).

WBS Code Definition in 'Project1'

Code preview: 1.A.1.A

Project Code Prefix:

Code mask (excluding prefix):

Level	Sequence	Length	Separator
1	Numbers (ordered)	Any	
2	Uppercase Letters (ordered)	Any	
3	Numbers (ordered)	Any	
4	Uppercase Letters (ordered)	Any	

☒ Generate WBS code for new task

☒ Verify uniqueness of new WBS codes

Help OK Cancel

Figure 1: Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) screen shot, Reference B, Page 9

	WBS	Task Name	Start	Finish	Deadline	Predecessors	Mar 21 '99	Mar 28 '99
1	1	T1	Wed 3/24/99	Fri 3/26/99	NA			
2	1.A	T2	Wed 3/24/99	Wed 3/24/99	NA			
3	1.B	T3	Thu 3/25/99	Thu 3/25/99	NA	2		
4	1.C	T4	Wed 3/24/99	Fri 3/26/99	NA			
5	1.C.1	T5	Wed 3/24/99	Wed 3/24/99	NA			
6	1.C.2	T6	Thu 3/25/99	Thu 3/25/99	NA	5		
7	1.C.3	T7	Wed 3/24/99	Fri 3/26/99	NA			
8	1.C.3.a	T8	Wed 3/24/99	Wed 3/24/99	NA			
9	1.C.3.b	T9	Thu 3/25/99	Thu 3/25/99	NA	8		
10	1.C.3.c	T10	Fri 3/26/99	Fri 3/26/99	NA	9		

Figure 2: Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) screen shot, Reference B, Page 9

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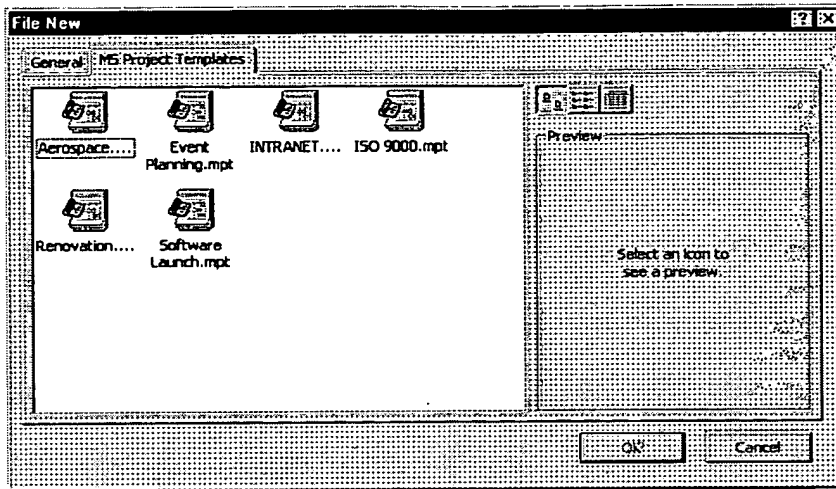


Figure 3: Existing Project Templates screen shot, Reference B, Page 20

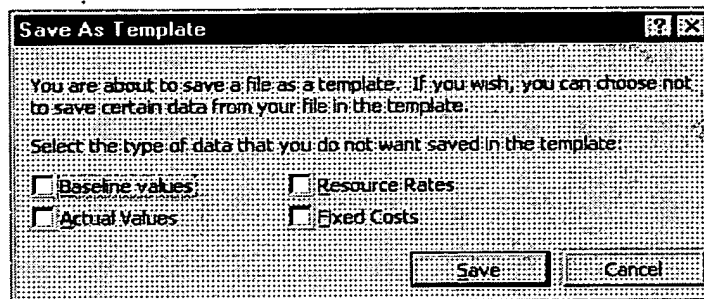


Figure 4: Save Project as a Template screen shot, Reference B, Page 20

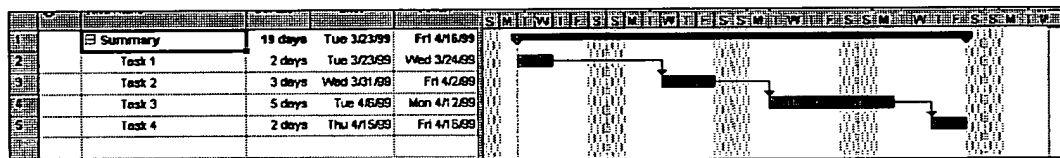


Figure 5: Summary Activity screen shot, Reference B, Page 21

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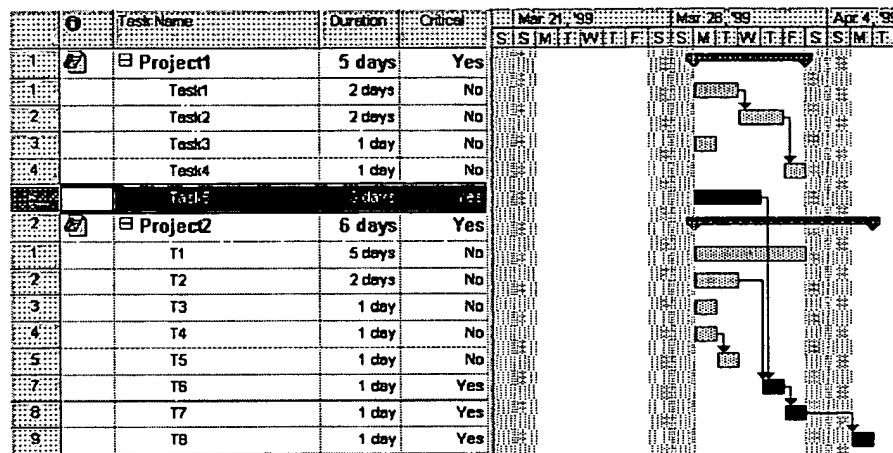


Figure 6: Multiple Projects screen shot, Reference B, Page 26

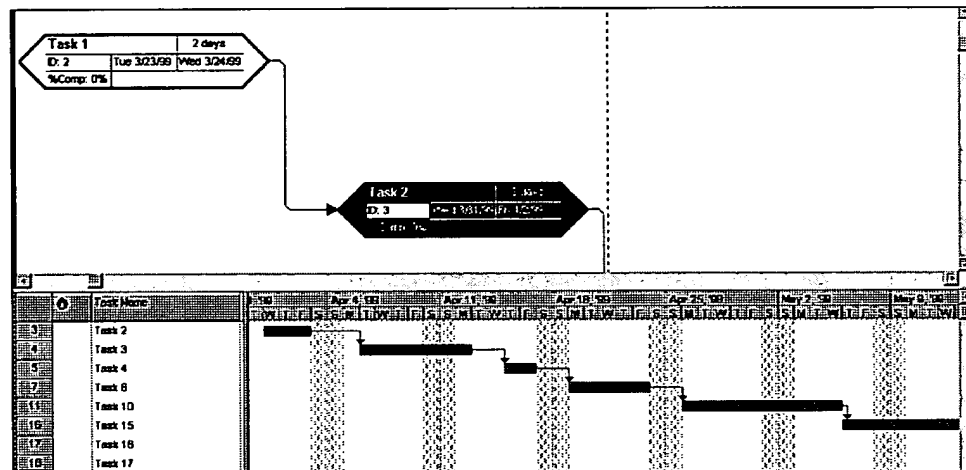


Figure 7: Network Workflow screen shot, Reference B, Page 29

While Microsoft Project 2000 teaches the identification of desired and undesired (repeated, duplicate) items (tasks, activities, data, etc.) Microsoft Project 2000 does not expressly teach the specific strategy (process, approach, etc.) for identifying those items that should be added to or removed from the consolidated project(s) as claimed.

Official notice is taken that any identification approach (search strategy, review pattern, etc.) that compared tasks (activities, milestones, etc.) amongst a plurality of projects (workflows, WBS, etc.) would be capable of identifying new items to be added or removed from the consolidated projects resulting in a substantially minimized work breakdown structure and related workflow.

Further as per applicant's own admission consolidating and minimizing of tasks (workflows, activities, processes) by adding, removing or combining tasks is well known in the art (Dewan, Rajiv et al., Workflow Optimization through Task Redesign in Business Information Processes).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for generating a project work breakdown structures (WBS) and related workflows as taught by Microsoft Project 2000, with its ability to identify, add and remove items in one or more projects, would have benefited from utilizing any number of item identification strategies, including the approach wherein the most downstream (last, lowest, bottom, etc.) activity is identified as the starting point for the comparison and then working upstream (bottom-top) until all activities have been reviewed, missing activities added or duplicate activities removed, in order to insure that WBS and related workflow contained the items necessary to achieve the desired outcome (complete the project; see reference A: Paragraph 3, Page 1; Paragraphs 1-3, Page 2).

Regarding Claims 2 and 13 Microsoft Project 2000 teaches a system and method for generating a project work breakdown structure (WBS) and related workflows further comprising (see reference A: Pages 1 and 3; see reference B: Figures 1-7 as shown above; Pages 8-10, 19-22, 25-26, 28-29 and 39; see reference C: Chapter 14 Sharing Resources and Tasks among Multiple Projects, Pages 335-363; Chapter 19 Importing and Exporting Project Data, pages 507-592; Pages 22, 144, 147, 343-347, 628-629; Figures 2.3, 14.6-14.9):

(d) selecting at least one undesired outcome (task, item, deliverable, milestone, date, etc.) for de-synthesis (removal, deletion, etc.), the selected outcome having an associated workflow;

(e) de-synthesizing (removing, reversing, unmerging, take apart, unlink, uncombined, decompose, etc.) the selected workflow from the project WBS and its related workflows (see reference B: Page 345-347).

Microsoft Project 2000 further teaches (see reference A: Paragraph 3, Page 1; Paragraphs 1-3, Page 2; see reference C: Page 345-347):

- determining whether each activity in the selected workflow is also part of the workflows associated with desired outcomes which are already present in the project WBS and its related workflows and working upstream until all activities in the selected workflow have been evaluated;
- removing any activity and activity dependency which are not needed as part of the project WBS and related workflows; and
- removing summary activities, as appropriate, from the project WBS.

Microsoft Project 2000 does not expressly teach the specific duplicate/repeat item identification process as claimed wherein the most downstream (last, lowest, etc.) activity is selected and used as the starting point for the identification process.

Official notice is taken that any identification approach (search strategy, review pattern, etc.) that compared tasks (activities, milestones, etc.) amongst a plurality of projects (workflows, WBS, etc.) would be capable of identifying new items to be added or undesired items to be removed from the consolidated projects resulting in a substantially minimized work breakdown structure and related workflows.

Further as per applicant's own admission the consolidating and minimizing of tasks (workflows, activities, processes) by adding, removing or combining tasks is well known in the art (see at least: Dewan, Rajiv et al., Workflow Optimization through Task Redesign in Business Information Processes).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for generating a project work breakdown structure (WBS) and related workflows as taught by Microsoft Project 2000, with its ability to identify, add and remove items in one or more projects, would have benefited from utilizing any number of item identification strategies, including the approach wherein the most downstream (last, lowest, bottom, etc.) activity is identified and then working upstream until all activities have been reviewed, desired activities added or undesired activities

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removed, thereby insuring that the WBS and related workflows generated contain the items necessary to achieve the desired outcome (complete the project; see reference A: Paragraph 3, Page 1; Paragraphs 1-3, Page 2).

Regarding Claim 3 Microsoft Project 2000 teaches a process, method and system for generating a project work breakdown structure (WBS) and related workflows representing the minimal work required to produce at least one desired outcome comprising (see reference A: Pages 1 and 3; see reference B: Figures 1-7 as shown above; Pages 8-10, 19-22, 25-26, 28-29 and 39; see reference C: Chapter 14 Sharing Resources and Tasks among Multiple Projects, Pages 335-363; Chapter 19 Importing and Exporting Project Data, pages 507-592; Pages 22, 144, 147, 343-347, 628-629; Figures 2.3, 14.6-14.9):

- (a) viewing a set of available WBS templates;
- (b) viewing a set of outcomes within and outside the scope of the WBS template (multiple projects with varying scopes, outcomes, etc.);
- (c) selecting a controlling (master, base, first, etc.) WBS template;
- (d) selecting at least one desired outcome and its associated workflows;
- (e) synthesizing at least one desired outcome from a set of desired outcomes wherein the outcome have associated workflows;
- (f) view the project WBS and related workflows; and

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Microsoft Project 2000 does not expressly teach the linking of documents/files (instructional content, help files, samples, templates, tool tips, notes, etc.) with project activities.

As per applicant's own admission including/associated files (documents, etc.) with activities is well known in the art (see at least Hecht, U.S. Patent No. 5,535,322; Hsu et al., U.S. Patent No. 5581691, Column 16, Lines 10-24).

Further official notice is taken that the inclusion of sample documents, help files, tool tips, or the like (instructional content) as part of a project management and/or workflow system is old and well known as a means for assisting in the successful completion of the project's desired outcome.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for generating a project work breakdown structure (WBS) and related workflows as taught by Microsoft Project 2000 would have benefited from enabling users to associate (link, include) a plurality of documents, including but not limited to instructional content, associated with the WBS, workflow, activity or the like; the resultant system being further capable of assisting the project's resource to successfully achieve the desired outcome of the project.

Regarding Claims 4 and 14 Microsoft Project 2000 teaches a system for generating a project work breakdown structure (WBS) and its related workflows



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comprising (see reference A: Pages 1 and 3; see reference B: Figures 1-7 as shown above; Pages 8-10, 19-22, 25-26, 28-29 and 39; see reference C: Chapter 14 Sharing Resources and Tasks among Multiple Projects, Pages 335-363; Chapter 19 Importing and Exporting Project Data, pages 507-592; Pages 22, 144, 147, 343-347, 628-629; Figures 2.3, 14.6-14.9):

(a) means for accepting as input an existing project WBS (controlling, base, master, etc.) and at least one desired outcome, the WBS having associated workflows;

(b) means for storing the existing project WBS and its related workflows (project database, Microsoft Project Central, auto save, etc.);

(c) means for storing a set of activities associated with a set of predefined WBS templates;

(d) means for identifying the lowest level (bottom most, most downstream, last, etc.) activities and their associated interdependencies (outline view, network chart, PERT chart, Gantt chart, filtering, grouping, etc.; see reference B: Pages 23, 29 and 39-40); and

(e) means for synthesizing (project consolidation, insert project) the selected (identified, associated) workflow and appropriate summary activities with the existing project WBS and its related workflows (insert project, project consolidation).

Regarding Claims 5 and 15 Microsoft Project 2000 teaches a system and method for generating a project work breakdown structure (WBS) and related workflows further as discussed above.

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Microsoft Project 2000 does not expressly teach the linking of documents/files (instructional content, help files, samples, templates, tool tips, notes, etc.) with project activities.

As per applicant's own admission including/associated files (documents, etc.) with activities is well known in the art (see at least Hecht, U.S. Patent No. 5,535,322; Hsu et al., U.S. Patent No. 5581691, Column 16, Lines 10-24).

Further official notice is taken that the inclusion of sample documents, help files, tool tips, or the like (instructional content) as part of a project management and/or workflow system is old and well known as a means for assisting in the successful completion of the project's desired outcome.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention that the system and method for generating a project work breakdown structure (WBS) and related workflows as taught by Microsoft Project 2000 would have benefited from enabling users to associate (link, include) a plurality of documents associated with the WBS, workflow, activity or the like; the resultant system being further capable of assisting the project's resource to successfully achieve the desired outcome of the project.

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Regarding Claims 6 and 16 Microsoft Project 2000 teaches a system and method for generating a project work breakdown structure (WBS) and related workflows further comprising a means for viewing outcomes (dates, milestones, deliverables, etc.) of a project WBS and related workflows as discussed above (see reference B: Pages 8-10 and 38-39).

Regarding Claim 10 Microsoft Project 2000 teaches a system and method for generating a project work breakdown structure (WBS) and related workflows further comprising the selection of at least one undesired outcome from the set of outcomes for de-synthesis (removal, deletion, etc.) as discussed above (see reference A: Pages 1 and 3; see reference B: Figures 1-7 as shown above; Pages 8-10, 19-22, 25-26, 28-29 and 39; see reference C: Chapter 14 Sharing Resources and Tasks among Multiple Projects, Pages 335-363; Chapter 19 Importing and Exporting Project Data, pages 507-592; Pages 22, 144, 147, 343-347, 628-629; Figures 2.3, 14.6-14.9).

Regarding Claim 11 Microsoft Project 2000 teaches a system and method for generating a project work breakdown structure (WBS) and related workflows further comprising de-synthesizing the selected workflow from the project WBS and its related workflows by referencing the controlling (base, master) WBS template (remove items from template, clear baseline; see reference B, Pages 20-21; see reference C: 345-347).

***Examiner Note***

Examiner has cited particular sections, pages, and paragraphs or figures in the references applied to the claims for the convenience of the applicant. Although the specific citations are representative of the teachings in the art and are applied to the specific limitations within the individual claim, other passages and figures may apply as well. It is respectfully requested from the applicant, in preparing the responses, to fully consider the references in their entirety as potentially teaching all or part of the claimed invention, as well as the context of the passage as taught by the prior art or disclosed by the examiner.

***Conclusion***

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Suibb, Mark, U.S. Patent No. 5,729,743, teaches a system and method for synthesizing (merging) and de-synthesizing a plurality of project documents into and/or out of a controlling (primary) document wherein the differences (deltas) in the documents are evaluated.

- Wolters et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,826,252, teach a method and system for managing a plurality of distributed projects (workflows) comprising: the selection of existing (template, master, base) projects, dynamically pulling/pushing updates (editions, revisions) between the plurality of projects (new, ongoing or the like), revision control, best practices (instructional content), importing/exporting projects, de-

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synthesizing projects (superceding global templates) and a combine function for synthesizing (merging) one or more projects wherein the combine function further includes the evaluation/comparison of items between the local and global projects to see if the item already exists.

- Macrae et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,826,237, teach a method and system for synthesizing workflows (projects, process flows, protocols, treatments, work breakdown structures) wherein synthesis includes comparing the workflows and removing duplicates and conflicts both automatically and manually. Macrae et al. further teach that the workflow synthesis system can utilize rules to resolve conflicts and provides the ability to create and utilize templates (base, master, primary).

- D'Arrigo et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,848,394, teach a method and system for generating work breakdown structures and their associated workflows. D'Arrigo et al. further teach that the system utilizes work breakdown templates and incorporates Microsoft Project as a means for creating and storing workflow information.

- Thomas et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,460,052, teach a system and method for synthesizing and de-synthesizing project documents (configuration management, versioning).

- Heck, Mike, Project management software: Microsoft Project 2000 extends reach across enterprise, teaches the availability of Microsoft Project 2000 in November 1999. Heck further teaches that the Microsoft Project 2000 product enables team members who spot missing tasks (readily apparent in the product's outline format) may

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insert the task in the appropriate part of the project and that the project owner then must decide if the new task becomes part of the project or not.

- Howle, Amber, Project 2000 betas now available, teaches the availability of Microsoft Project 2000 and Microsoft Project Central in November 1999.

- Marmel, Elaine, Microsoft Project 2000 Bible, teaches the plurality of features/capabilities in Microsoft Project 2000 including but not limited to the use of templates, work breakdown structures, network diagrams (PERT charts), consolidating projects, coordinating multiple projects and utilizing multiple critical paths.

- Duncan, William, A Guide to the Project Management Book of Knowledge, teach a plurality of well-known best practices in project management. Duncan further teaches the best practices related to workflows, work breakdown structures and configuration management. More specifically Duncan teaches the use of work breakdown structures from previous projects being utilized as templates for new projects and that work breakdown structures are customized (updated, revised) to meet the specific requirements of the new project (refinements).

- Krutchen, Phillipe, Rational Unified Process, An Introduction, teach the well-known Rational Unified Process which serves as a template (framework) for managing projects and further wherein projects include work breakdown structures and workflows. Krutchen further teaches the role of configuration and change management in the unified process and a plurality of tools that support those activities.


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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott L. Jarrett whose telephone number is (703) 306-5679. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00AM - 5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hafiz Tariq can be reached on (703) 305-9643. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

SJ  
3/14/2005

  
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